

7/14/78
BI 116

Return
to ARA/ECA
R
July 14, 1978

Dear Mr. Moorhead:

Thank you for your June 21 request for information concerning export licenses for materials for Chile and Argentina.

Both the Administration's human rights policy and Section 502 (B) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, require that human rights considerations be taken into account when approving applications for the sale of items appearing on the Munitions Control List. After October 1, 1978, Section 620 B of the Foreign Assistance Act will bar altogether approval of licenses for the export to Argentina of Munitions List items.

Few new arms sales to Argentina have been approved since last October. We have discussed this situation with the Argentine Government on several occasions over the past few months. We had hoped that the human rights situation in Argentina would have improved by now sufficiently to allow the approval of new licenses. This has not been the case, however, and we continue to be deeply concerned about the persistence of human rights problems in that country, particularly the disappearance of numerous persons, including churchmen, labor leaders and members of local human rights organizations.

Under the circumstances, we do not believe that we can approve Aviation Power Supply's request to export Munitions Control List items to Argentina until we perceive an improving trend in Argentina's human rights performance.

The Honorable

Carlos J. Moorhead,

House of Representatives.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s): _____

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as _____ () Extend as _____ () Downgrade to _____

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

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We recognize and appreciate the hardship which a negative decision imposes on Aviation Power Supply, Inc. and its employees, and we are troubled by the impact which lost sales will have on them and on our economy at large. Nevertheless, we believe that the present Argentine human rights situation must be a determining factor in this case.

I hope that these thoughts will be helpful in understanding our position with respect to arms transfers to Argentina.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations.

Enclosure:
Correspondence returned.

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